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Drawing Amendments

There are no amendments to the drawings.

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Remarks

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding Final Office Action mailed on 03/07/2005. The Final Office Action rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,453,022 of J.B. Weinman, Jr. (hereafter referred to as Weinman) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,768,722 of H.P. Katseff, et al (hereafter referred to as Katseff). Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 5 is being amended.

Rejection of Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claim 5 has been amended to overcome this rejection. Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 5 now meets the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Rejection of Claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 recites:

A method for controlling a conference call of a plurality of communication terminals, comprising the steps of:

displaying on a first one of the plurality of communication terminals an identity of a second one of the plurality of communication terminals in response to a first signal from the first one of the plurality of communication terminals;

disabling audio information received from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals

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on the conference call in response to a second signal from the first one of the plurality of communication terminals; and

re-enabling the audio information received from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals on the conference call in response to a third signal from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals after the audio information from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals had previously been disabled by the second signal.

A system in accordance with the steps recited in claim 1 would allow a first terminal to disable audio information from a second terminal being included in a conference call. Further, the second terminal can re-enable its audio information to be included in the conference after the audio information from the second terminal had been disabled by the first terminal. To re-enable the use of its audio information in the conference call, the second terminal transmits a third signal that overrides the operations of a second signal from the first terminal which had originally disabled the use of the audio information from the second terminal in the conference call.

In the example set forth in applicant's specification, page 3, line 17 through page 4, line 27, operations are described where a user of a station set 103 can disable the use of audio information being received from cellular telephone 119. However, the user of cellular telephone 119 can re-enable the use of the audio information from cellular telephone 119 on the conference by actuation of a button on cellular telephone 119. Clearly, in such system operations, the circuit performing the

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conferencing operations (e.g. conference circuit 106 in applicant's specification) must be able to receive and respond to signals from both station set 103 and cellular telephone 119 so that these signals control the utilization of audio information from cellular telephone 119.

The Office Action states that:

Weinman, Jr differs from claimed invention in which it does not teach the step of re-enabling the audio information received from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals on the conference call in response to a third signal from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals after the audio information from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals had previously been disabled by the second signal.

However, Katseff the step of re-enabling the audio information received from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals on the conference call in response to a third signal from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals after the audio information from the second one of the plurality of communication terminals had previously been disabled by the second signal (see Fig 5, elements 509 and 512; and col. 22, lns 44-54; and col. 24, lns 35-54).

Therefore, integrating Katseff's teachings into conferencing system of Weinman, Jr would be benefit to an on-hold user because the on-hold user can override his on-hold status previously set by an associated communication party.

Applicants respectfully submit that Katseff does not teach the operations attributed to Katseff by the above section of the Office Action. Party A of Katseff, for sake of argument, is equivalent to the first one of the plurality of communication terminals, and party B is equivalent to the second one of the plurality of communication terminals. Katseff teaches that party A can place party B on hold and no audio information will be received by party A from party B until party A removes the call

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hold. While party B is on hold, party B can instigate a "monitor" hold. This monitor hold allows party B to dial the extension of another party, such as party C. However, even if party B takes the call with party A off the monitor hold, audio information from party B will not be received by party A until party A removes the hold that party A placed on the call.

Consider now FIG. 5 of Katseff. Block 505 establishes a communication session between party A and party B. At block 506, party A places party B on hold. At block 507, party B places party A on a "monitor" hold, and party B establishes a new communication session with party C. Katseff clearly states "in this way, the monitored communication will remain silent until party A takes the call off hold and resumes communication. In this case, when party B resumes the communication session, BRG 300A, would begin transmitting packets including communication information from party A which could be combined with communication packets being sent by party C and the combined communication would be presented to party B via BRG 300B (col. 24, lines 10-18.)" FIG. 6 and accompanying text shows greater detail in the operation of Katseff.

In addition, the following example given in Katseff at col. 23, lines 13-20 provides further clarification of the operations disclosed in Katseff:

In one variation, party A may be a call center that queues incoming calls for one of a plurality of agents. In this case, the

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BRG 300A would immediately and automatically place the incoming call on hold, without the intervention of a physical person and party B would receive filler information from the call center. When a call center agent at party A answers the phone, the communication session with party B would be taken off hold.

In summary, claim 1 is patentable over Weinman in view of Katseff under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) since Weinman and Katseff separately or combined do not disclose the steps recited in claim 1. Claims 2-4, as presently in the application, and amended claim 5 are directly or indirectly dependent from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Rejection of Claims 6-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 6 and dependent claims 2-10, as presently in the application, are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) for the same reasons as claims 1-4, as presently in the application and amended claim 5.

Summary

In view of the foregoing, applicants' respectfully request consideration of amended claim 5, reconsideration of claims 1-4 and 6-10, as presently in the application, and allowance of these claims.

Although the foregoing is believed to be dispositive of the issues in the application, if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone

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number listed below.

Respectfully,

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